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California Homestead Sites Evaluated

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THE GREEN

FOR HOMESTEADERS, ON-TO-THE-LANDERS,
AND DO-IT-YOURSELFERS



REVOLUTION

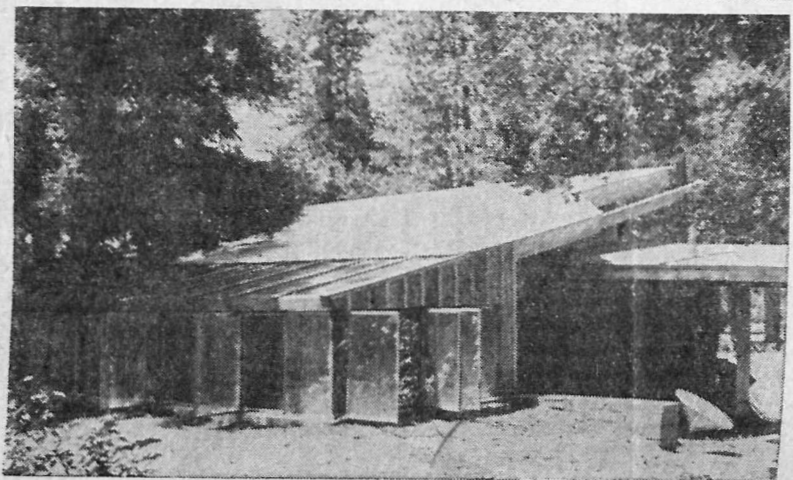
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Kern Writes And Homesteads



TWO VIEWS of the Ken Kern homestead, near Oakhurst, Calif. Above, one side of house, and, below, the handsome sun-pit, a kind of "cool" greenhouse.

Volume IV, the final one, of **The Owner-Built Home** will deal with the Design and Structure of Building. The research has been completed, the material is all gathered and outlined, and the first chapter will appear next month.

Some totally new concepts of contemporary space organization will be presented, including a free-form building constructed in Europe. This includes a bi-nuclear court garden and other bio-technic design features discussed in complete detail. Space

for cooking, living, and sleeping is analyzed in relation to its function in design and structure.

A special Homestead Planning Section will appear in the concluding chapters. The complete Volume IV will be printed (monthly) in **Green Revolution**.

The Kerns have now completed a beautiful and functional homestead near Oakhurst, Calif. But they are eager to try yet other new and experimental ideas, and will soon begin another homestead at the opposite end of their 25 acres.

California Homestead Sites Evaluated

By Bill Peavy*
77 S. P St., Merced, Calif.

In California, getting title to land is becoming increasingly difficult. In Los Angeles County and in the San Francisco Bay Area, people are packed like sardines; many want to get into the country; land is in great demand, and selling at fantastic prices.

Friends of ours in the Sierra

*Bill Peavy, teacher of horticulture in the Merced, Calif., High School, offers some data in response to letters published in past issues of **The Green Revolution**.—Editor

Colorado Meeting

Robert and Grace Wade, Box 6, Walden, Colo., are inviting do-it-yourselfers, homesteaders and School of Living people to a weekend picnic get-together at their homestead Aug. 6, 7, and 8. They welcome any Coloradans or others from surrounding states. Bring surplus from your gardens, and campers, trailers, tents, for which there is adequate space on their homestead or nearby. Come to Walden and call the Wades, 723-4560. Activities, discussions and projects will be developed among those who come. The Wades would appreciate a note or card from those who plan to be there.

foothills (4000 ft.), northeast of Fresno, bought 30 acres four years ago for \$4000. Today they can sell for \$30,000. Not very rich or well-watered hill land, but who can say what it will be worth five years from now?*

Mariposa County

Forty miles east of Merced, also in the foothills (2000 to 4000 ft.), rainfall 25 to 40 in., native Ponderosa pine, is a thriving subdivision business and realtor's paradise. One acre goes for \$1000; 10 acres for \$5000; 30 to 50 acres at about \$300 an acre. One could buy 10 acres for \$5000, divide it in half, sell for \$5000, get all his money back and still have 5 acres to boot. This is not bad homestead country, but about the only people able to afford it are retirees who have money coming in from the outside. Making a cash income (continued on page 4)

*The Bay Area in the 1800s was the scene of Henry George's experiences and reflections that resulted in his famous book, **Progress and Poverty** (now in nearly every library and for sale, at \$1.50, from Henry George School, 50 E. 69th St., New York City). Henry George's, and other, solutions to the problem of land and taxes are discussed in our companion journal, **A Way Out** (particularly in February and May issues).—Editor

Lord Love A Bug—

Pests Are A Part Of Your Garden; Have You Learned To Love Them?

By Hal Porter*

A homestead without a garden is no homestead at all; and the success of the garden depends to a great extent on mental and emotional attitudes. Of course a good case may be made that our success in living depends on the same thing, but for the purpose of this article we are mainly concerned with the raising of fruits and vegetables. And, even more specifically, we are concerned with our attitudes toward all things which creep, crawl, or fly; and eat, chew, suck, or dig up the things we have growing.

Any student of living who contemplates the establishment of a garden is faced with the problem of what to do about the pests. What he does depends on his attitude. Suppose he is one of those persons who says, "I hate bugs. I hate snakes, lizards, toads, and all those creepy, crawly things." This person will immediately start a war of eradication, by poison spray and powder, the minute something eats a tiny hole in one of his plants. If squirrels molest his corn he either shoots them or puts out poison; the same with the birds if they peck at his berries or fruit. He takes it as a personal affront when either insect or animal

pests bother his garden. He engages in relentless warfare.

But his campaign of hate is self-limiting. The more he poisons, the more insects he has. He kills all the natural enemies of the bugs and worms with his poisons. But the pests become immune, and with nothing to stop them they breed unchecked. The poison sprays pollute his soil to the point where his plants become more and more sickly. To cure this he puts on more and more chemical fertilizer. This also poisons the soil until eventually his garden spot becomes a weed-spotted plot of ground where nothing will grow and he buys all his fruits and vegetables and consoles himself with the belief that after all it is cheaper to buy than to grow.

So an attitude of hate will not make for a successful garden.

But neither will an attitude of indifference. No gardener worthy of his vine-ripened tomatoes can go out in the morning and find that a hornworm has eaten up half his choice vines and just shrug his shoulders and say "So what." Such a don't care attitude is a real impossibility. Anyone who could hold to such would never try to have a garden in the first place. A solution must be found because otherwise the gardener will become a prey to the destructive emotions of anger, hate, resentment and fear. He grows things both for his mental and physical health. The growing is soothing to the emotions and good for the soul. The home-grown vegetables help his physical well-being. Now, of course, he doesn't need to take it out on the bugs, he could take a pill, as advertised on television, except that continued dosage with drugs can cause annoying and dangerous side-effects.

So what to do? adopt an attitude of love. In this day and age among the sophisticates the idea

of love for your fellow men is considered square or corny. A statement that we should love our garden pests is likely to bring on derisive laughter. Yet it is a very practical attitude. And, as the punch line of an ancient joke goes, "We must love him, but we don't have to like the S.O.B." Really it isn't so difficult if we think of it in the proper manner. If we have a pet dog and we love him and he burys his bone in the petunia bed, we don't decide to dock his tail right back of his ears. We don't call for the exterminator when little junior's football finds its way into the lettuce bed, with resulting damage to small plants. Because we operate from an attitude of love, the mischief of our pets or our children is accepted as annoyance but a necessary part of life. The same way of looking at the depredations of the insect world can make them no more of an irritation.

If we believe that there is a divine plan for the universe and all that lies therein, there must be a reason and a place in the world for all these garden pests, big and small. This even includes the neighbor who comes over to inspect the garden and passes over the luxurious growth of the corn and sweet potatoes and only sees where the cut-leaf worm is eating up the beans. This same neighbor, if you offer him a mess of your mustard greens, will probably point to a small hole in a leaf and remark that bugs have been on them and that he won't eat anything that a bug or worm has chewed a hole in. We can always answer that the bug only ate a little bit. There's plenty left for us. The neighbor will reply that bugs carry germs, little realizing that there are good and bad germs and that if it wasn't for the germs there would be no other life.

(to be continued)

Come To Michigan

Mrs. Joy Valsko writes of the many attractions for vacationing and learning in northern Michigan, and encourages people to come for the sessions planned on her country property near Traverse City for School of Living people, the weekend of Aug. 21-22. She says she has already received notes from several who want to be part of the meeting.

She hopes a mutually satisfactory use can be planned for the land and several buildings which are in various stages of completion. She will welcome any who can come early to assist in making the buildings as comfortable and usable as possible for our August sessions.

"We have swimming at a natural beach on our place," she writes, "and 100 acres of woods for roaming (with 50,000 planted pines). Two improved beaches are nearby; every known sport is within driving distance; there are many arts and crafts shops. Interlochen Arts Academy and Music Camp give a festival here in August.

"I am finishing a guest house; can accommodate trailers and tents, with outdoor facilities and electric connections. And another building—if someone could arrive early to help clean it up—would do for bunk room; wood and electric stoves; water transported. We can use large rooms and lawns of another building for meetings. There are several baths and one-half baths in one building.

"Plans for this School of Living meeting have inspired me and renewed my hope that we can do something useful and constructive. I'm looking forward to it. Ask any questions."—Mrs. Joy Valsko, 516 W. 7th, Traverse City, Mich.

Youth Rally Initiates Old Mill; 60 Travel To Big Weekend

The Youth Rally, June 11-14, was the first of what we hope will be a recurring series of "educational" activities at the Old Mill on Anacker Acres, Heathcote Community, Freeland, Md. Here the old and new combined. The three-story, stone mill, standing since 1850, the result of the sturdy, hardworking independence of an earlier day, offered space and shelter but no convenience and little comfort. The participants were, for the most part, young and independent thinkers, not concerned with the amenities but with free expression and action on vital personal and public issues.

The Rally began a few months ago as a suggestion that School of Living young people gather to discuss and help prepare the place for summer use. Gradually notices and promotional materials emphasized pacifist-anarchist goals. A few inquiries came; no registrations. A crew arrived early to begin the work. Among them were the vigorous septugenarian Smith brothers, Pennsylvania farmers, who were in the garden each day at dawn, a party from Lane's End, and the Dee Hamilton family who have been residents since early May. By Thursday people began arriving by one, two and threes—including two from the Maryland Intelligence Service to check the nature of the meeting, to be able to give adequate assistance should any "trouble" develop. (None did.) That the attendance totaled 60 (highly vocal, intelligent persons from New York, Chicago, Ohio, Indiana, Baltimore and Virginia) was a surprise to us and an indication of the ferment, the searching and concern today. Ideas flowed freely, vigorous and hearty discussion ensued, adequate meals appeared at regular intervals at very low cost, some real physical work got done, recreational intervals enjoyed.

Spontaneity Predominated

The program was open to change and the needs of the group. Two students of Adelphi University presented a list of proposals for "Education For A Revolutionary Age" which included self-search by students, with teachers only as guides; no grades or degrees; more (continued on page 2)

"Interchange," A New System

By Mildred J. Loomis

A new way of exchanging goods without money is gaining ground in some quarters. It could be a help to the homestead movement.

This is not direct barter — exchange of goods for goods. But it is complex barter, in which the medium of exchange is a receipt instead of coin, check or paper-money.

The one credited with originating the idea is Noel Pratt, Rt. 1, Front Royal, Va. A couple of years ago he began saying to his friends, "Let's start doing business without money. I have something in surplus, like potatoes, apples, typing paper, mimeographing skill. You need some of this, so I give it to you. Instead of paying me money, you just sign a receipt that you have received it. Send me the receipt and I'll deposit it in what I call The Bank of Interchange. Then I'll announce your credit to others. Others can give things away, take receipts, deposit them in BIC. Soon we will get out a catalog listing what people want and what they have to give away. Then BIC is in business, and so are you, without any money. That's all there is to it."

Usable Goods

This method of doing away with cash interested me. Anything that is a step out of our exploitive money system looks good to me, so I "joined." When the catalog listing goods for exchange arrived, I found I had little need for the type of goods listed. Indeed I have very few material needs outside our own production. But when I came across a supplier of pecans, I immediately ordered 16 lbs. for \$5! They came—beautiful nuts from W. W. Wittkamper, Americus, Ga. All I did was sign a receipt, which Mr. Wittkamper sent to Bank of Interchange. Later I sent wheat to Walt Englebrecht

in Tennessee, etc. I have now built up some credit in BIC.

Branches Developing

Local and regional branches of a receipt-exchange have been developing independent from and aside from Noel Pratt's effort. Several reasons account for this. One is that members benefit from not having mail or

Comments, cont'd

In competition each must naturally use his attributes — brute physical strength and human intelligence. Subconsciously we all recognize this, and try to suppress in different ways, the more predatory aspects of combined fear and intelligence.

Regulating Personal Action

There are two methods of accomplishing this. One through regulatory measures by social legislation, and the other through individual useful accomplishment.

Europe has been characterized by dependence on social handling and legislation. We are aware of the disastrous results over the past century. . . . The history of the parts of the world in which men have channeled aggression into individual productive activity is quite a different story. One notes that in those areas of social altruism and control, warfare is a common way of releasing energies. In those societies honestly recognizing self-interest, energies are spent in competitive enterprise.

May I point out the American tendency over the past few decades to demand more social restraint on individual independence? — James E. Work, 41 Waverly Court, Framingham, Mass. 01701

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by Scott & Helen Nearing

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freight expense when they are close enough together to exchange goods directly. Another is that special emphases can be included or excluded as the members decide. Some people prefer that their exchange system be free of religious doctrine that accompanies Share, under the direction of Noel Pratt. Others prefer to exchange goods of a higher quality than seems to be the case in the original group of Interchangers.

As a useful and non-exploitive technique, members of School of Living are logically interested in this non-cash system of exchange. In our December 1964 A Way Out an item described the basic principles and underlying ideas. It has since been elaborated in the March and May issues, which are just recently in the mails. We are indebted to Miles Roberts of Rt. 2, Villisca, Iowa, for these articles. Mr. Roberts is a long-time friend of the School of Living, a consistent homesteader and developer of seed and nursery products.

Neighborliness

Basically, says Mr. Roberts, Interchange is only the well-known neighborliness where one person open-handedly supplies another out of surplus belongings. No money payment is asked and no debt is specifically incurred, yet Interchange is not merely a give-away proposition. Those who put things out freely do so in the expectation that they will, in the course of time, be remunerated for it by someone, somewhere in the Interchange system, in response to some need of their own. But an Interchanger can reach out many miles by means of his "Wanted at Interchange" sheet, and have his need supplied as freely as if it were by someone a house or farm or two away.

Benefit to Homesteaders

Mr. Roberts also says:

"I regard Interchange of special value to people of meager financial resources trying to find some escape from the modern complex by way of a return to the land. To make this break a family would need a different type of equipment around them for the simpler mode of living they were taking up. Much of this could be had from Interchange at small cost—that is, for receipt only plus delivery costs. Some of their own surplus belongings could be sent out in the same way, and to keep their own credit rating.

"A tremendous amount of good seed and nursery stock is produced by small operators (rarely salable locally), and numerous staple items of food could move through Interchange. Wheat and other grains, dried beans, etc., can be shipped long distances cheaply by freight. Perishable goods will have to wait for the time when there are local Interchange sectors. There are also loads of good usable (surplus) clothing, small tools, implements and household furnishings that would be available through Interchange, delivered

Magazine Delayed

In an effort to decentralize School of Living activities. A Way Out has been delayed, but we are hopeful of getting on schedule again.—M.J.L.

The Owner-Built Home, cont'd

day's revolution will occur when employment, including political, economic, and technical operations, shall become a means to the tender love, personal growth, and spontaneous artistry of settled home life.

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Note. This is the end of Volume III. Volume IV will begin next month.—Editor

A Man's Roots

"A man belongs where he has roots — where the landscape and milieu have some relation to his thoughts and feelings, by virtue of having formed them. A real civilization recognizes this fact—and the circumstances that America is beginning to forget it, does far more than does the mere matter of commonplace thought and bourgeois inhibitions to convince me that the general American fabric is becoming less and less a true civilization and more and more a vast, mechanical, and emotionally immature barbarism de luxe. . . . I cannot think of any individual as existing except as part of a pattern — and the pattern's most visible and tangible areas are of course the individual's immediate environment; the soil and culture-stream from which he springs, and the milieu of ideas, impressions, traditions, landscapes, and architecture, through which he must necessarily peer in order to reach the 'outside.'" — August Derleth in Walden West, page 65, Duell, Sloan and Pierce, New York.

economically.

"I believe there will not be a strong homesteading movement until a way is found whereby the financially impoverished can take it up. Membership in a fairly large group of Interchangers might clear the way for some. Two things are great roadblocks: the difficulty of finding land at low cost, and the low adaptability to rural life after years of city dwelling and reliance upon cash income. But we can find ways to help one another—if we want to bad enough."

Some Try Wilderness Homesteading

A trend among young people, disillusioned with "civilization," is to try out wilderness living. Reports have come in of several college "dropouts" going into the woods for primitive camp life. Some like it; others don't. But all testify that the experience is worthwhile.

Green Revolution has a good many readers in Canada, many of them having left the "States" to settle there in the years School of Living has been publishing. There are some at Argenta, B. C. (story in March '62 Balanced Living); others, including the Wise, Laux, and Freedman units, are at Farquhar, B. C. The Freedmans left college in 1959 and have since built three log cabins and developed two wilderness homesteads. Regular reports from them indicate complete absorption in their activities.

Bruce and Pam Beck, in New England, write as follows:

"In late April, 1964, Pam and I were at Joel Kent's forest home at Jamaica, Vt., doing a few odd jobs like sawing dead limbs off pine trees. He asked us to spade up a garden plot about 20 x 20. A slightly smaller area had been gardened two years before, but the fresh ground was full of quack grass.

"In one day I spaded up an area about 5 x 15, and broke up the clods with my hands by pulling and twisting on them, until a little clod only an inch or two in size was left. I found that this work on my knees was the most satisfying part of the job. Spading was a little tedious, but my hands in the soil with no spade in between was a contact with the elemental. The old garden soil had just occasional bunched

roots, which were handled in the same manner, but the quack roots of course were sorted out and removed from the garden. It should have been a good weed-free garden; we never learned because we left for British Columbia. My guess is that a heavy

mulch thereafter, plus mixing in of compost, would make turning of the soil for planting almost unnecessary.

"Last spring I was eager to go into a complete wilderness life, not realizing how nowadays one is pretty isolated from those similarly inclined. This is one big reason why we are planning to return to New Hampshire this summer, for a hand-labor, subsistence farm. Our temporary address will be c/o A. Harvey, Raymond, N. H.

California, cont'd

locally—even the lower amount needed for homesteading—is difficult.

Taxes

Both state and county governments in California have gone crazy on taxes. The rate here in Merced is about \$8 per \$100 of valuation. An acre of producing fruit trees may run \$30 taxes a year; hill land with no buildings will be taxed at \$1 an acre. A new three bedroom house selling at \$12,000 is assessed at 25% or \$3000. At \$8 per \$100 valuation this is \$240 a year or \$20 a month.

Alternatives

Why do we live here? The climate is good, we have a job, and we have not found a better alternative. Also, we have a good deal of freedom of choice in health matters, like exemption from compulsory vaccination. We would not consider living in one of the states which allow no exemptions (Ark., Ky., Md., Mass., N. H., N. Y., Pa., R. I., S. C., Va., and W. Va.). One might get an M. D. to forge a certificate but who wants to live under such a gestapo set-up? Will readers from these states please comment.

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FEN

Stagnant water it is called and so if we define our terms it be. But bending low one can somewhat see the multitudinous flit and skip and whirl the scurry of imperceptible legs flicking hurry. And one can sense trillion filaments rooted in the superficial slime or clinging to the edges, a botanical perfection, self-contained, self-reliant. A community of sunnied tenure nibblingly superior to waters running clearer.

—Chester D. Dawson

(Note: All poetry must be read very slowly, as one savors some tantalizing aroma. Not rhyme but cadence is the poet's desideratum. The "superior" with "clearer" is not poor rhyme, but rather assonance, a splendid and useful poetic device.)

Boylans Visit Sons Of Levi

Paul and Lela Boylan, of Shelbyville, Mich., are pioneers in the decentralist and health movements. Back in the 1940s they were charter members of Circle Pines, a cooperative recreational farm-camp near Delton, Mich. Some years ago they left their homestead there, and established a natural-food store near Shelbyville, and have helped the natural food activities and education develop in their state.

Interested in a religious-based community, they arrived at the Sons of Levi Community, near Mansfield, Mo., on May 6, and remained for nearly six weeks of learning and helping. Here a closely knit group lives and

works on 1760 acres of wooded and tilled land, called South Range Ranch, under the direction of Rev. Marl V. Kilgore, president of the community. (See Nov. and Dec. 1964 Green Revolution.)

When the Boylans arrived the community was in the beginnings of a spring cleaning and improvement program which included applying white siding to several outbuildings. In a letter of appreciation, Mr. Kilgore reports that the Boylans worked day after day applying this siding with the result that "the appearance continued to improve and now with all completed we have a much brighter and tidier looking community."

Other Activities

Mr. Boylan is a very enthusiastic photographer and took many rolls of film of the community and surrounding countryside. They also indulged their nature hobby, and enjoyed the birds and animals of the Ozark hills. Eddie Motter, a blind gymnast in the community, was able to participate in his enjoyment with other senses than sight.

The Boylans also enjoyed the freedom which allows each person their own particular views on philosophy and religion with the right to voice such opinions in the various meetings. Mr. Boylan testified that in his investigations of other communities he found this one to be temporally and spiritually harmonious, extending welcome to members, visitors and neighbors.

Appreciation for Mutual Aid

Rev. Kilgore expressed appreciation for the mutual aid and brotherly love that the Boylans conveyed. No complaints were heard. "Even the food (which they did not expect to find to their liking), they found tasty and agreeable. . . . We thank them for their love and help, and we extend to Green Revolutioners everywhere an invitation to stop by any time to visit and fellowship with us in peace."

(advertisement)

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